

## Agricultural.

T. H. HOSKINS, Newport, Vt., Editor.

## "The New England Farm Fair."

"The public appearance of that money-making ring known as the New England Agricultural Society is confined to an 'annual fair' of a week's duration, but the influence of this autumn debacle is perennial, and may be counted as the most degrading to which the rural population of the six states is subjected. These are grave charges, but scandalous facts are back of them. We have repeatedly referred to the subject, and now it is most encouraging to find *The Farmer* of Boston adding the weight of its helpful word to that of *The Homestead* of Springfield, *The Press* of Providence, *The Watchman* of Vermont, and other papers, against a repetition in 1884 of this outrage upon the agricultural public under the disguise of alleged respectability. In a recent issue of the journal first named the question is asked, 'What has the society accomplished during the nineteen years of its existence?' It was organized in 1864 ostensibly for the encouragement of agriculture in all its branches, both by the application of the best intellectual efforts, and by exhibition of animals, products and machinery." To what extent it has belied this declaration let *The Farmer's* statement bear witness: 'Take the fair at Manchester, September, 1883, for an example; was that an exhibition to invite attendance by the honest farmer and his family, or any citizen who takes pride in his manhood? Was that show anything to be proud of for the members of the society, or the friends of agriculture? Was it not, on the other hand, a sad regret and disappointment to all interested in agricultural improvements, temperance and morality? Was it not one of the most demoralizing exhibitions ever held in the New England states?'

We cut the above from the *New York Weekly Tribune*. In addition, the *Tribune* quotes several paragraphs from the letter of "An Original Member," published in a recent issue of the *New England Farmer*, and reprinted by us in our issue of January 2. The exhibition in question was held in Manchester, N. H., and the *Mirror* and *Farmer* of that city prints, under date of January 10, what purports to be a reply to the *Tribune*. We print this reply, so far as it refers to the question at issue, omitting only a plea to the effect that Manchester did its best in the matter, which we do not doubt:

"The *New York Tribune* of last week contains an article denouncing in the most savage way the New England fair held in this city last fall, which it characterizes as a 'rum fair,' an 'annual debauch,' a 'gathering of gamblers,' a 'dog show,' which made everything hideous; 'an outrage upon the agricultural public,' and so on, until the writer exhausts his stock of epithets. All the *Tribune* knows or pretends to know about the subject, on which it talks so fiercely and with such an assumption of righteous indignation, it gets from two or three New England papers which are controlled by a few scoundrels, who have from the first been the enemies of the New England society because they have never been able to control it and shape its policy to further their own selfish purposes. Some of these men have been fair managers themselves, and having made sorry failures of the business are envious of everybody who has succeeded. Others are eaten up by an itch for the notoriety which they think an election to the directory of the New England society would give them; and still others long to get their hands into the society's treasury. All of them think, of course, that the fair, which they seldom attend, is run by a ring; that it is only an annual debauch; that it has accomplished nothing for agriculture, and that the sooner it is abolished and something put in its place, which they can run, the better. Every winter for fifteen years they have been scolding about it, denouncing it, and declaring that it must go in just the same words and phrases which the *Tribune* now accepts as a plain statement of recent and startling facts. What they think, or say they think, matters little in New England, where everybody is accustomed to their howling and knows why they howl; but it is to be regretted that a paper like the *Tribune* should join in the chorus, and if it will give us its attention we will lay before it a few plain facts that will, we hope, send it into better company. It is true, as alleged, that there was a dog show at the last fair, and it is also true that it was one of the most interesting features of the exhibit; one that farmers as well as others examined closely, and which resulted in putting upon the farms a good many trustworthy and valuable dogs in the place of the worthless curs that were there before. It was a feature which was in no way demoralizing, disgraceful or damaging to anybody, and, in common with most who saw it, we hope to see it repeated next year. It is true, secondly, that 'the raging horse-race was present,' and it is true, further, that out of the proceeds of this came a large share of the money that paid the premiums on cattle, sheep and swine, and other farm products. At least ten thousand people paid the admission fee to the fair expressly to see the trotting, and the farmers, who enjoyed the races as much as anybody, carried away the money. Probably there was betting on the races, but if there was it was done under cover, where nobody who wasn't hunting for a chance to gamble was any the wiser for it, and so far as we can find out, the horse-trotting was as free from objectionable annexes as it ever is. As to 'gambling in other pleasing forms' being freely permitted by the officers, that is sheer fiction, and so is the statement that the society 'allowed the free sale of rum and realized \$1,500 from this source alone.' It was expressly stated to every man who rented ground in the park for the sale of refreshments that nothing stronger than lager beer must be sold, and the superintendent of the grounds and the police were instructed to enforce this order to the letter."

It is hardly worth while to say anything in regard to the furious and senseless charges of the first part of this article of the *Mirror* and *Farmer*. The agricultural newspapers which have criticized the New England society at length, such as the *New England Farmer*, the *Rural New Yorker*, the *New England Homestead* and the *American Cultivator*—to say nothing of Vermont journals, such as the *Freeman* and *The Watchman*—are not conducted by men who have ever shown the least desire to manage Dr. Loring's show, or to associate themselves with him in whatever honor, profit or glory could be got out of it. The editor of the *Mirror*

and *Farmer* knows this perfectly well, and dares not make such a charge personally against the conductors of any of the papers named. They have simply done the duty of journalists to their readers, as they honestly conceived it. The *Mirror* and *Farmer* is a "stalwart" political paper of a type which, in the progress of civilization, is fast passing away. It has, in this article, employed that kind of writing which it is accustomed to use in political controversy, and which has been so effectively ridiculed by Dickens and Trollope. The editor who, in these days, is content to write in the style of the "Estimate" and "Slide" is merely a curiosity—a "Quintus Slide" who has outlived his generation.

Passing this, it will be seen that, after all, the charges of horse-gambling, and the sale of intoxicating drinks are admitted, and excused as sources of profit. That the horse-racing was dishonestly conducted was repeatedly stated by the *Mirror* and *Farmer* at the time. That other liquors besides beer were sold is known by the testimony of hundreds, and no visitor had to "hunt" for a chance to gamble. In fact the admissions of the *Mirror* and *Farmer*, when the temper and spirit of its article are allowed for, are really equivalent to a confession of all the most damaging charges that have been made against the Loring show. The purpose to repeat these insults against law and decency, so truculently answered, should be a warning to the respectable portion of our rural population to keep away from the city of Manchester at that time.

## The Waltsfield Fertilizer Experiment.

Mr. Editor:—Your remarks on my fertilizer experiment impel me to a short explanation. The superphosphate was used at the rate of two hundred and fifty pounds per acre, at a cost of \$5.50 per acre, and the bone and ashes compost was applied at the same rate of cost per acre on a part of each plot, which of course would be in much larger quantity, and on the other part of the plot was used bulk for bulk as against the superphosphate, with no difference in crop on the two parts of each compost plot. The bone and ashes were applied to about one and one-fourth acres in all. The experiment was made solely to compare the two fertilizers, and care was taken to have the conditions alike in each case, and also to make the application so as not to injure the seed. In fact, this experiment is but one of several which have invariably resulted in the same way, and which seem to me to indicate that upon certain soils the application of potash is at least unnecessary. In proof of this, several of my neighbors have told me that they have never seen any benefit from the application of ashes upon corn or potatoes, while others who, last spring, prepared a fertilizer after Dr. Cutting's formula, at a cost of \$15 per ton, and used it in equal quantities against Bradley's XL, report that it produced quite as good results as the latter. These trials were all made upon our river soil. And now, Mr. Editor—I don't wish to trespass further upon your time or patience, and don't want you to waste your space in printing this—I would like to know why you still continue to use the XL if the other "is just as good and thirty-three per cent cheaper?" In this connection I will say that the experiment of a vat under a stable of eighteen cows, in which to collect the liquid manure, has been highly successful. During the past year we have pumped from this vat and distributed directly upon the land fifty-five loads of about one hundred and twenty gallons each, at small cost of time or strength. That this is a most valuable fertilizer, there can be no doubt. That it is now, in most cases, suffered to go to waste, is equally certain—and this notwithstanding that *green sand* may be liberally used as an absorbent. That no farmer can afford to allow this waste, and then buy commercial fertilizers to make it up, must be plain to the dullest apprehension. The cost of my vat did not exceed \$10, and judging from the crops to which its contents were applied, I believe them to have been of more value to me than a ton of even Bradley's XL. In truth, Mr. Editor, does not the true solution of the fertilizer problem, for the dairy farmer at least, lie in the intelligent use of concentrated food for his stock and the careful saving of the manure, both liquid and solid? Verily, I believe it does. C. E. J.

REMARKS BY AGRICULTURAL EDITOR.—This second letter from C. E. J. puts a quite different face upon the experiment as at first reported. Of course, in trial of a strong potash fertilizer against another with but little potash, upon land where potash does no good, favorable results for the former could not be reasonably looked for. This was just the place for Dr. Cutting's fertilizer, and it is certainly a great boon to such of our readers as are fortunate enough to be farming land that is not in need of potash, to be told that Bradley's XL can be replaced fully by a fertilizer costing only about one-third as much. We wish more of Vermont territory was of this character, but even where ashes are needed they can be applied separately. C. E. J. wants to know why we still use the XL if our bone and ashes compost is just as good and one-third cheaper. The reasons are that often we find ourselves short, near the close of the planting season, and can always get one, two or three barrels of XL at the village to finish out with. Last year we used a barrel on our onions just to spur them up a little, as a very few days in that crop is often the difference between success and failure. We also used it on our earliest sweet-corn, and at the rate of a pint to the hill for squashes, melons and cucumbers.

In regard to the quantity of the bone and ashes compost used—three barrels to one and one-fourth acres, in combination with a dressing of manure, on a soil where only the bone (one barrel) was of any use—it was too small of course for the experimenter to distinguish in either case what was due to the fertilizer, and what was due to the manure. We never use it in that way. We either use all manure or all fertilizer, and then we know what we have been doing, and where to give the credit. If we would have used \$25 worth of manure we use the same value of fertilizer, and so in proportion always. We never expect to see the time when we can find any artificial fertilizer which will come cheaper, for the same results, than good stable manure.

We fully agree with C. E. J. in what he says about saving liquid manure. There is no one thing that our farmers can do for profit that will pay them so well as to follow our correspondent's example and advice in this matter. For the state "there is millions in it."

## Young Men—Business Men.

It is easier to be a good business man than a poor one. Half of the energy displayed in keeping ahead that is required to catch up when behind will save credit, give more time to attend to business, and to the profit and reputation of those who work for gain. Be prompt. Keep your word. Honor your engagements. If you promise to meet a man, or do a certain thing at a certain moment, be ready at the appointed time. If you have work to do—do it at once, cheerfully and therefore more speedily and correctly. If you go out on business, attend promptly to the matter on hand, then as promptly go about your own business. Do not stop to tell stories in business hours. If you have a place of business, be found there when wanted. No man can get rich by sitting round stores and saloons. Never "fool" on business matters. If you have to labor for a living, remember that one hour in the morning is better than two at night. If you employ others, be on hand to see that they attend to their duties, and to direct work to advantage. Have order, system, regularity, promptness, liberality. Do not meddle with business you know nothing of. Never buy an article simply because the man who sells will take it out in trade. Trade is money. Time is money. A good business habit and reputation is always money. Make your place of business pleasant and attractive, then stay there to wait on customers. Never use quick words or allow yourself to make hasty or ungentlemanly remarks to those in your employ; for to do so lessens their respect for you, and influences over them. Help yourselves and others will help you. Be faithful over the interests confided to your keeping, and all in good time your responsibilities will be increased. Do not be in too great haste to get rich. Do not build until you have arranged and laid a good foundation. Do not—as you hope or work for success—spend time in idleness. If your time is your own, business will surely suffer if you do. If it is given to another for pay, it belongs to him, and you have no more right to steal than that to steal money. Be obliging. Strive to avoid harsh words and personalities. Do not kick every stone in the path; more miles can be made in a day by going steadily on than by stopping to kick. Pay as you go. A man of honor respects his word as he does his bond. Ask, but never beg. Help others when you can, but never give when you cannot afford to, simply because it is fashionable. Learn to say no. No necessity of snapping it out dog fashion, but say it firmly and respectfully. Have but few confidants—and the fewer the better. Use your own brains rather than other's. Learn to think and act for yourself. Be honest. Be vigilant. Keep ahead rather than behind the times. Young man, cut this out, and, if there is folly in the argument, let us know.

## One Vermont Farmer's Experience.

A Newbury, Vt., farmer thus relates his life experience briefly in the *Mirror* and *Farmer*. There is no cause to "despair of the republic" so long as we know that our country possesses a great number of such faithful, self-respecting, thinking men—and women, too. These are they who come to the front in times of storm and stress. But otherwise the "village Hampdens" live and die obscure, yet are still the salt that keeps the nation sound and sweet:

"My experience in farming has been that of thousands of men in these states which are separated by the Connecticut river. I was born upon a small, hard farm, not long cleared from the woods. As soon as I was old enough to work I was sent out to earn my bread. What little schooling I had came to an end when I was sixteen. My lot, after that, was the usual lot of a hard-working farmer's son, on a farm encumbered by a heavy mortgage. My possessions, on coming of age, consisted of two dollars in money and my working clothes, and a few good books. The next three years I worked out, studying all my spare time. With my wages I bought some land, and then settled down at home to help my father take care of his aged parents, lift the mortgage, and do as God should prosper us. We have been called successful farmers. Our old house has given place to a better one. In the room of our old barn we built a larger one, which we have had to enlarge several times. The mortgage long ago disappeared. Our stock is worth more than our whole farm twenty years ago. Perhaps we have done as well as most farmers in similar circumstances. We have a good farm, handsome buildings and a fair income. Yet the longer I live and become more thoroughly acquainted with it, the more I am persuaded that there is more to be known than we can know; that farming, of all pursuits, demands and repays the most careful study and application. I feel my ignorance of

principles upon which soil and crops depend. I know very little about the chemical or botanical qualities of the plants I cultivate, or the properties of the soil I till. I have learned much by observing the operation of other farmers and the management of farms connected with public institutions. Had I had the opportunity of learning these things earlier, I might have realized more of my ideal of farming. If I could have worked two years or more with some farmer of acknowledged skill, and learned his ways, I should have known better how to avoid some mistakes, and have made more of my means than I have. No doubt my farming experience has been like that of many thousands. Now, with all our disadvantages—our lack of education, the absence of special training, the burden of hard work, the slow and small returns of our industry—have not our farmers accomplished more than any other class of men given our scanty training and isolation? When those who are to come after us, with their agricultural schools, and better facilities, take our places, let us hope that they will accomplish results which were beyond our power."

## Fertilizers for Clubs.

F. W. Ainsworth of Calais, Vt., writes: "I have read with much interest the columns of your department in THE WATCHMAN, and especially the recent articles upon commercial fertilizers. Can you give us any information or help in any way to bring about the low price for cash for these fertilizers? We have a farmers' club in good running order and wish to buy a carload of phosphate."

In reply to Mr. Ainsworth we can say that while unmanufactured fertilizers, such as ground bone, ground South Carolina phosphate rock, sulphate of ammonia, etc., can be bought in Boston at a considerable reduction by the carload, a manufactured phosphate is, under our new fertilizer law and the customs of the dealers, not so easy to get in that way. The four or five makers who have taken out licenses have practically a monopoly in the state, and are, to all intents and purposes, protected by the law against competition from other makers, who might be very willing and glad to sell the Calais farmers an equally good article at a considerably less price, but who could not afford to take out a license to make only such a single sale. The only competition now existing is between the few licensed companies, and these are all working through agents who are protected by their principals, the manufacturers. No purchases can be made except through these agents, and of course they must have their commissions. The best that can be done is to get one of these agents to divide his commission with the club. If we had any home fertilizer factories it might be different, but even then it would be very difficult to make the farmers in general have the same confidence in a home company that had not first made a reputation by expensive advertising and costly agencies. Upon the purchaser comes at last the expense that the seller is put to in persuading him to buy, and this is often half the cost of the article. If the simple facts about manures and fertilizers were taught in our schools, as a part of elementary chemistry, we should in time have a race of farmers who would know what they want and how to get it, just as they now do when they buy flour and salt, which require no "drumming," and for which money spent in drumming would be wasted.

## Stabling the Cows at Night.

My cows have been kept in the stable every night for the last seven years. Before that time my pasture had begun to fail very perceptibly. At first we used to sow corn for fodder, to help eke out the pasture until we turned in to fall feed. And each year we kept increasing the plat of fodder, but not enough to make up the deficiency of the failing pasture. The manure with which we used to grow this feed was made during the winter, and consequently took so much from the usual winter store of fodder—for at that time we saved only the solid part of the manure, and our tilled fields produced no more or less each year only as the season was good or bad. But feeding our cows extra and turning out nights did not bring up our pastures; they still continued to fail. The cows would go to the woods, or seek the poorest land, to lay nights, where their droppings would do the least good—and I had nearly as soon have a stick or stone in place of their droppings, for all the extra grass that would grow there. I have seen it advised in print to go around with a hoe and spread the manure. I have done so in the mowings, and in places where the cattle had lain it would be as thick as if spread at the rate of fifteen two-horse loads to the acre; but it never increased the grass (and I have spread it thus a great many times) as a like quantity, drawn from the basement and spread late in the fall, has many times since done. Now we use muck and dirt to absorb the liquid portion, and each year I find we might have used more to good advantage. Some say it will not pay because they cannot get the dirt dry enough. If the dirt was dry as ashes, a little would go a great ways, but would not go so far when used as a top-dressing (as usually spread). Except in flush feed, I give the cows something every night and not so much in the morning. I think they feed better early in the day, when the dew is on. They will come up early at night and hang round, as if to be fed, if there is not much to be had in the pasture; and they had better be put in the barn and fed, thus saving the manure. Some say feeding makes them lazy. I have seen cows that I thought were discouraged for want of too little feed. If it pays to keep cows at all, they must have enough of something to eat. The profit will come in the extra milk and butter, better condition to enter winter quarters, and the extra manure—if saved. For the majority of our farmers, the time has come when a partial selling of their stock is their only salvation. B. Calais, Vt.

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